

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 109338
ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

UNCLAS STATE 109338

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR

SUBJECT: STATE 11 MAY PRESS BRIEFING

FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT DAILY
PRESS BRIEFING OF 11 MAY FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

I WOULD LIKE TO READ INTO THE RECORD THE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE
BY THE DEPARTMENT THIS MORNING AT 10:30 WITH REGARD TO
RHODESIA:

"THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE, MR. CYRUS VANCE, AND THE
BRITISH FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY, DR. DAVID OWEN,
HAVE CONSIDERED THE PROBLEM OF RHODESIA IN THE LIGHT OF THE
LATTER'S TRIP TO AFRICA. BOTH GOVERNMENTS WISH TO REITE-
RATE THEIR COMMON DETERMINATION TO WORK FOR THE INDEPENDENCE
OF RHODESIA UNDER MAJORITY RULE IN 1978. THEY HAVE BEEN
ENCOURAGED BY THEIR CONTACTS SO FAR TO BELIEVE THAT DETAILED
CONSULTATIONS ABOUT AN INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION AND THE
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 109338

NECESSARY TRANSITIONAL ARRANGMENTS COULD BE A SATISFACTORY
WAY TO ACHIEVE THIS. THEY HAVE, THEREFORE, AGREED THAT
BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES SHOULD NOW ENTER INTO A PHASE
OF INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES. FOR THIS PUR-
POSE, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO ESTABLISH A
CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE PARTIES WHICH

WILL VISIT THE AREA AS NECESSARY, INCLUDING SALISBURY. IT
WILL BE HEADED BY MR. J. A. N. GRAHAM, DEPUTY UNDER SECRE-
TARY AT THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE. MR. VANCE

HAS AGREED TO APPOINT A SENIOR UNITED STATES OFFICIAL TO WORK WITH THE HEAD OF THE BRITISH CONSULTATIVE GROUP."

Q: THAT LAST POINT -- SHOULD THAT BE READ AS BEING AN AMERICAN GROUP, OR A SINGLE AMERICAN PERSON, POSSIBLY WITH A NOTE TAKER?

A: I HAVE ONLY THAT A SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL -- SINGULAR -- WILL BE ASSIGNED TO THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP. HIS MISSION WILL BE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH MR. GRAHAM, BUT HE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED THE CO-LEADER.

NOW AS TO WHO ELSE MIGHT BE IN SUPPORT OF OUR SENIOR OFFICIAL ASSIGNED TO THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, I DON'T HAVE ANY INDICATION OF WHETHER WE WOULD HAVE A STAFF OF ONE, OR TWO, OR THREE -- OR WHAT HAVE YOU.

Q: WOULD YOU THEN SAY THAT THE AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT ISN'T AS LARGE AS THE BRITISH?

A: IT IS PRETTY DIFFICULT TO PUT IT IN TERMS OF SIZE. WE ARE THERE TO SUPPORT THE BRITISH, AND TO COORDINATE WITH THEM IN THEIR CONSULTATIVE GROUP.

Q: WELL THEN, WOULD YOU SAY, AS FOR INSTANCE MR. NKOMO HAS SAID, THAT THIS IS LARGELY A BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY?
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 109338

A: I THINK IT HAS BEEN EMPHASIZED FOLLOWING THE MEETINGS IN LONDON LAST FRIDAY THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PLAYING AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS WHOLE PROCESS. I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO QUANTIFY WHAT OUR ROLE IS. I DON'T THINK THAT REALLY IS POSSIBLE. BUT WE ARE VERY DEFINITELY IN FULL SUPPORT AND IN FULL COOPERATION WITH THE BRITISH AS THEY PURSUE POSSIBLE WAYS TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THERE.

Q: BUT YOU ARE NOT CO-CHAIRING -- CO-SPONSORING -- CO-LEADING.

A: NO. THE LEADER OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, CLEARLY, IS MR. GRAHAM.

Q: IF WE ARE NOT A LEADER, THEN DOES THAT MAKE US IN THESE EFFORTS A FOLLOWER?

A: THERE ARE TWO MAIN PARTIES IN THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, AND WE ARE ONE OF THEM.

Q: BUT WE ARE NOW LETTING THE BRITISH TAKE THE INITIATIVE, IS THAT IT?

A: THE BRITISH HAVE THE LEADING ROLE.

Q: SO GRAHAM IS NOW GOING TO DO WHAT MR. RICHARDS DID, BASICALLY?

A: I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU CAN COMPARE THE ROLE OF THE TWO GENTLEMEN. MR. RICHARDS WAS THE CHAIRMAN OF A GENEVA CONFERENCE, SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. I DON'T THINK THAT THE TWO ROLES ARE NECESSARILY COMPARABLE.

Q: THIS IS A JOINT STATEMENT?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 109338

A: YES. THE BRITISH MADE A SIMILAR ANNOUNCEMENT THIS MORNING IN PARLIAMENT.

Q: BUT IT IS NOT A JOINT INITIATIVE?

A: IT SEEMS TO ME IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT THIS IS VERY DEFINITELY AN INITIATIVE IN WHICH WE ARE TAKING PART.

Q: BUT IT'S A BRITISH INITIATIVE.

A: IT IS A BRITISH INITIATIVE WHICH WE ARE PARTAKING OF, FULLY SUPPORTING, AND COOPERATING IN.

Q: ABOUT A MONTH AGO, YOU SAID, WHEN DR. OWEN WAS TRAVELING AROUND, THAT AFTER HE CAME BACK HE WOULD CONSULT WITH THE BRITISH TO SEE WHETHER WE SHOULD CO-CONVENE A NEW CONFERENCE ON GENEVA.

A: YES.

Q: IS IT A FAIR ASSUMPTION THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE CONSULTATIONS IT WAS FELT THAT THE TIME WAS NOT RIGHT FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE NOW?

A: I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT CONSIDERATIONS WENT INTO CHOOSING THIS MECHANISM, WHICH I HAVE JUST OUTLINED FOR YOU, OVER A RECONVENED GENEVA CONFERENCE.

Q: DO YOU MEAN TO IMPLY BY THAT, THAT THIS MECHANISM IS TO TAKE THE PLACE OF A GENEVA CONFERENCE?

A: NO, I CANNOT SAY THAT BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW THAT TO BE THE CASE. IT WAS FELT, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THAT THIS IS THE PROPER COURSE TO PURSUE AT THIS TIME -- GIVEN DEVELOPMENTS

OVER THE RECENT MONTHS.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 109338

Q: DOES "TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS" MEAN A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT?

A: I THINK IT MEANS JUST WHAT IS SAYS. I CAN'T EXPAND THAT TO INCLUDE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT.

Q: COULD IMMEDIATE BLACK RULE BE ANOTHER SATISFACTORY WAY?

A: I DON'T THINK I CAN, AT THIS MOMENT, GIVE YOU SOME KIND OF PROJECTION OF WHAT THEY MIGHT COME UP WITH IN THE COMING WEEKS.

Q: DOES THE U.S. SUPPORT IMMEDIATE BLACK RULE IN RHODESIA -- WITHOUT PASSING THROUGH A PERIOD OF TRANSITION WHICH THE BLACK LEADERS HAVE SAID WAS UNNECESSARY -- WHICH WAS THE HEART OF THE KISSINGER APPROACH AND WHICH WAS REJECTED OUTRIGHT LAST YEAR?

A: I THINK I WILL JUST STICK WITH THE STATEMENT AS IT APPEARS TODAY.

Q: WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT THAT THIS STATEMENT EXPRESSES?

A: I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND.

OBTAINING, THEY ARE NOT GOING TO LAUNCH INTO THIS WITHOUT SOME REASON FOR BELIEVING THAT THERE IS A CHANCE FOR SUCCESS IN PURSUING THIS PARTICULAR METHOD.

Q: WHEN MR. GRAHAM MAKES HIS VISIT TO THE AREA, IS IT PROPOSED THAT AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL WILL ALWAYS ACCOMPANY HIM?

WHAT DOES THE PHRASE "WORK WITH" MEAN, ACTUALLY?
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 109338

A: IF IN THE COURSE OF THE CONSULTATIONS IT IS DECIDED THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE AMERICAN OFFICIAL -- FOR INSTANCE IN SALISBURY -- WOULD BE BENEFICIAL, THEN OUR MAN IS PREPARED TO GO THERE. AND I THINK THAT GOES FOR OTHER PLACES AS WELL.

Q: THEN DOES THAT MEAN THAT THERE WILL NOT BE A HEADQUARTERS, OR WORKING OFFICE, SET UP SOME PLACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA BY THE U.S. -- LET ALONE, BY THE BRITISH?

A: ON BACKGROUND: I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WILL BE AN OFFICE DOWN THERE, YES, IN A LOCATION AS YET TO BE DETERMINED. I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INDICATION WHERE THAT WOULD BE, AT THIS TIME. AND THE AMERICAN OFFICIAL WOULD

BE COLOCATED WITH MR. GRAHAM.

Q: THE BRITISH GROUP WILL MAKE VISITS TO SALISBURY. WHEN IT DOES, WILL THE AMERICAN --

A: HE WILL VISIT THE AREA, AS NECESSARY, INCLUDING SALISBURY.

Q: IT TALKS HERE ABOUT A PHASE OF INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES. DOES THAT INCLUDE ALSO THE LEADERS OF THE GROUPS THAT ARE NOW ENGAGED IN FIGHTING THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT?

A: ALL I HAVE IN THE WAY OF CLARIFICATION OF THAT IDEA IS THE TERM "PARTIES." AND I AM NOT GOING TO HAZARD A GUESS AS TO WHO THAT MIGHT MEAN, HOW WIDE IT IS OR HOW RESTRICTIVE IT IS.

Q: AND WHO WILL BE THE AMERICAN OFFICIALLY THERE?

A: WE DO NOT KNOW THAT YET. THAT WILL BE MADE KNOWN IN UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 109338

DUE COURSE.

Q: WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "SENIOR?" DOES THAT MEAN THAT HE WILL COME OUT OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, OR COULD HE COME OUT OF THE WHITE HOUSE, OR SOME OTHER.

A: HE WILL BE APPROPRIATELY HIGH RANK. I PRESUME HE WILL BE STATE, BUT LET'S WAIT AND SEE WHO IS NAMED.

ON THE TRIP OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG TO AFRICA, WE WILL HAVE FOR YOU IN THE AFTERNOON -- I HOPE IT IS EARLY AFTERNOON -- SOME MORE INFORMATION ON HIS ITINERARY.

Q: THE U.S. YESTERDAY ABSTAINED IN A VOTE AT THE WORLD BANK ON A COUPLE OF LOANS FOR ETHIOPIA. IS THIS A FIRST, AND WAS IT DONE BECAUSE OF THE EXPULSION OF AMERICANS RECENTLY, OR JUST HUMAN RIGHTS?

A: ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, THE UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE ABSTAINED ON TWO PENDING WORLD BANK LOANS TO ETHIOPIA. THE REASON: BECAUSE OF OUR GRAVE CONCERNS REGARDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THERE.

NOW, WHILE WE DEPLORE INCREASING REPORTS OF VIOLATIONS IN ETHIOPIA, WE ARE KEENLY SENSITIVE REGARDING THESE TWO LOANS -- ONE IS FOR 25 MILLION DOLLARS TO IRRIGATE TEN

THOUSAND HECTARES OF LAND, AND SETTLE ABOUT EIGHT HUNDRED FAMILIES; AND THE OTHER IS FOR 32 MILLION TO CONSTRUCT OR

UPGRADE EIGHT THOUSAND KILOMETERS OF ROAD -- WE WERE KEENLY SENSITIVE THAT THESE LOANS ARE LIKELY TO BENEFIT ETHIOPIANS THAT ARE MOST IN NEED, SO IN OUR VOTE--RATHER THAN OPPOSING THE LOANS--WE CHOSE THIS METHOD OF ABSTENTION TO REGISTER OUR GROWING CONCERN.

I MIGHT ADD THAT IF THE SITUATION IMPROVED, WE STAND READY
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 109338

TO WORK WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AFFIRMATIVELY TO PROMOTE PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN ETHIOPIA.

Q: WILL THIS SET OUR COURSE IN FUTURE ACTIONS OR IS IT A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS?

A: I THINK IT EXEMPLIFIES WHAT THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HAVE SAID WITH REGARD TO HOW WE'RE GOING TO HANDLE OUR VOTES IN SUCH INSTITUTIONS AND THE CONDUCT OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY IN GENERAL. WE LOOK AT EACH SITUATION, WE WEIGH THE PROS AND CONS, TAKE INTO ACCOUNT A LOT OF FACTORS, AND THEN MAKE OUR DECISION. SO I THINK THIS IS INDICATIVE OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. CHRISTOPHER

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